



American Girl



September/October 1996

\$3.95

Fresh!

*New Costumes to
Make for Halloween*

Crisp!

*Take Sharp,
Snappy Photos*

Delicious!

*Super School
Lunches to Pack*

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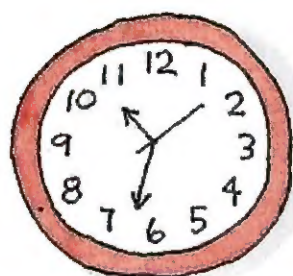
Find-Its!

These fun facts are sprinkled throughout the magazine. Find them and share your knowledge with a friend!



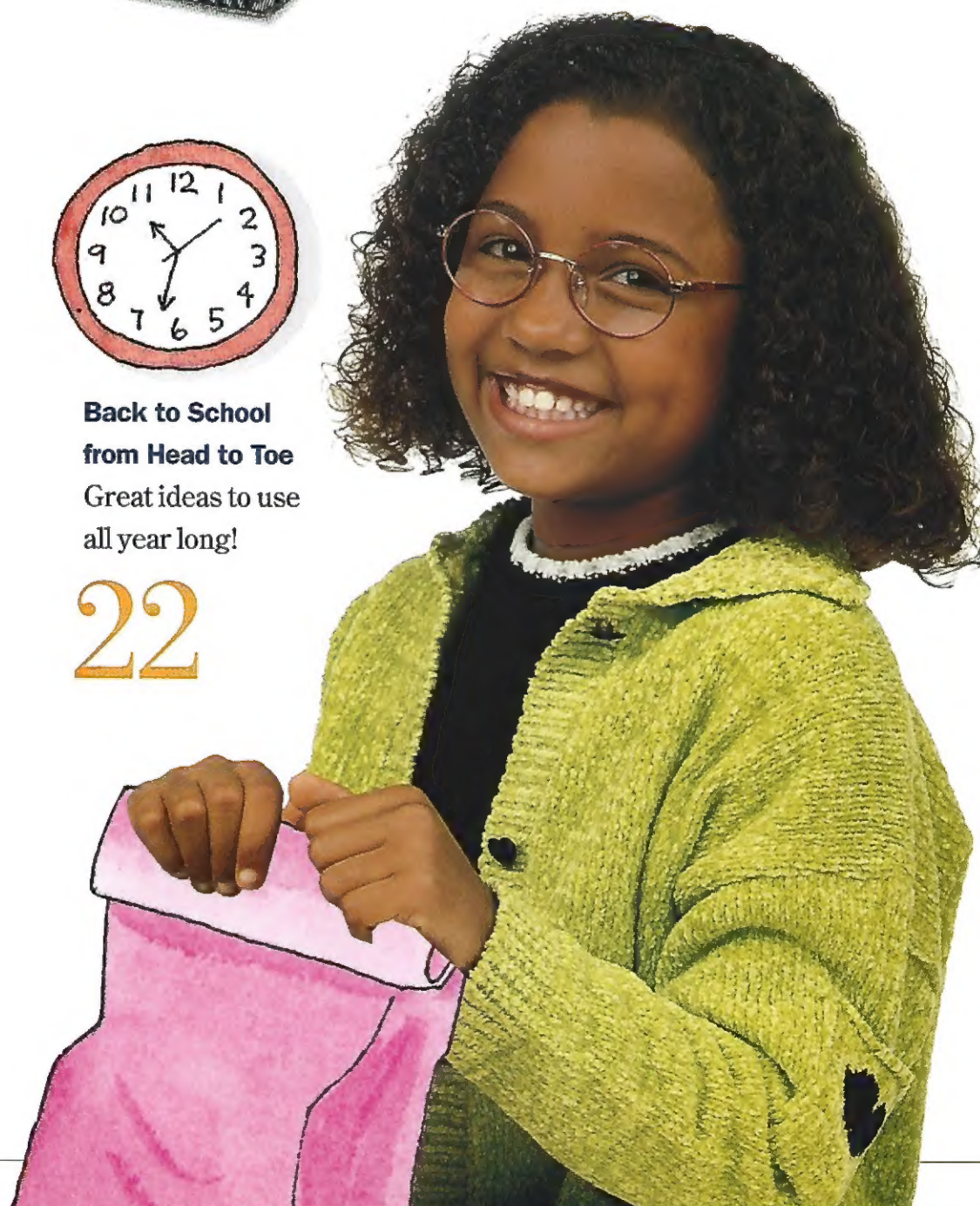
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Celebrating Girls, Yesterday and Today



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by girls like you

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Get a new angle
on your snapshots!

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On the Cover

Meet Rachel Davey, age 9. Rachel says the best thing about starting fourth grade is making new friends. And the next best thing is learning a new game: volleyball. "Now recess and lunch will be even more fun!" she says.

Rachel Davey



Letters from You



Worth Reading



The story "Everything Worth Having" in the May/June issue made me cry. After I read it, I went outside and rubbed my dog's tummy. Thank you for including such a touching story.

Frammy Gaede
Age 8, Scottsdale, Arizona



Being Different

I loved the May/June Heart to Heart on being different. Instead of marching to the beat of a different drummer, I march to the beat of a whole different band! Thanks for showing me it's all right.

Michelle Johnson
Age 14, Lafayette, New Jersey



A View of the Amish

I am writing about your story on the Amish community in the May/June issue. With all due respect to their religion, I think the Amish are fencing in their children from the real world. I'm in eighth grade and I can't imagine not continuing my education after this year.

I've hardly scratched the surface! I think the world we live in is wonderful.

Kayci Hughes
Age 13, Euless, Texas



That's Eye-Opening!

I truly enjoyed your article on glasses in the May/June issue. I've been having trouble seeing and will probably end up getting glasses. You made the topic so interesting that I don't dread getting glasses!

Emily Hough
Age 11, Eugene, Oregon



A Good Sign

I thoroughly enjoyed your article about My Kids in Sign in the May/June issue. My best friend's brother is deaf, and I went to camp with him and his family. The first thing I noticed was their applauding technique. They raised their arms and wiggled their wrists, just like you mentioned in the article!

Kelley Burd
Age 12, Bristol, West Virginia

American Girl



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The National
Award for Excellence



TM

Girls Express



Buzzword

American girls everywhere are using this buzzword this season:

ubiquitous

How to say it: yoo-BICK-wi-tuss

What it means: present everywhere at the same time

Where it comes from: In Latin, *ubique* means "everywhere." Put a *tous* on the end, and you have a word you'll hear used everywhere!

One way to use it: "Mia was saving her money for one of September's ubiquitous back-to-school sales."

The buzzword is tucked somewhere into this issue of *American Girl*. Can you find it?



Lunch Crunch



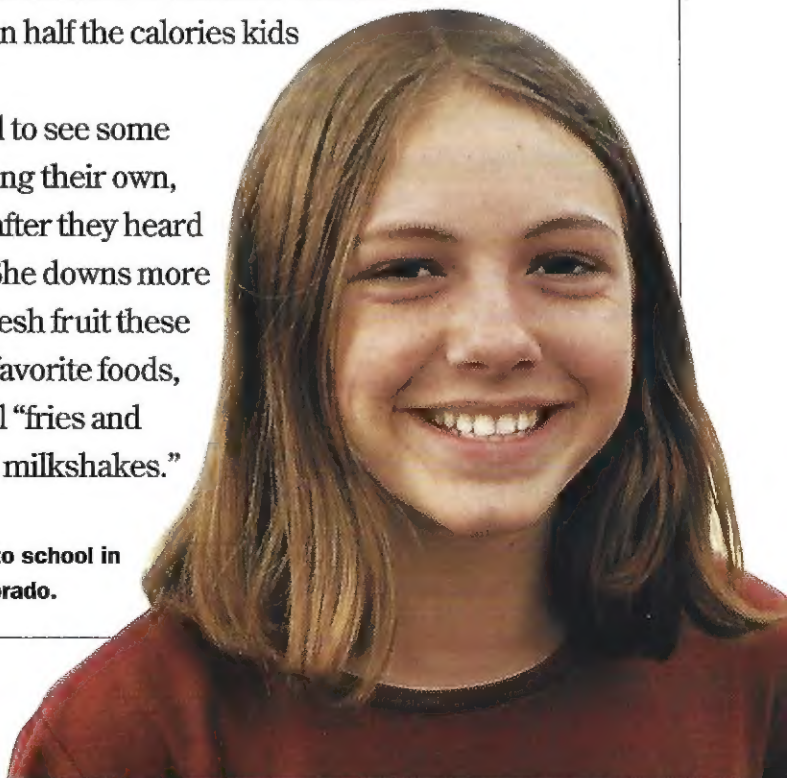
Nachos grande, refried beans, and cherry crisp sound like a tasty school lunch. But Sarah Bardwell, age 13, had a feeling the food dished up in her school's cafeteria wouldn't get an A+ in nutrition.

She decided to study the meals for a school project. She bought extra lunches for a week, took each home, and dumped it in the blender. She froze the glop that came out and took it to a lab that had agreed to analyze each mixed-up meal.

The result: the lunches were too high in salt and sugar. But the big surprise was the number of calories. The meals provided fewer than half the calories kids need at lunch!

Sarah was proud to see some friends start bringing their own, healthier lunches after they heard about her report. She downs more leafy greens and fresh fruit these days, too. But her favorite foods, she admits, are still "fries and burgers. O.K., and milkshakes."

Sarah goes to school in Denver, Colorado.





Halloween Night

On Halloween night,
I walk through the streets.
Looking and searching
For wonderful treats.
I see lots of pumpkins.
They're everywhere in sight.
I see lots of houses
With lights that are bright.
And just when I think
I can't walk on my feet,
I find a great house,
And I say, "Trick or treat!"

Julie Louis

Age 12, Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania



Moneymaker

"I started a business called See Spot Run. It's a dog care service, and it's run by girls in the sixth and seventh grade. A long walk in the neighborhood is 50 cents per dog. A day of care at the person's home—we manage food and water, walks, and playtime—is \$2 a day. We can care for other pets, too."

Susan Crawley

Age 12, Portsmouth, Rhode Island

Stamp Design Contest

These days, postage stamps carry pictures of everything from rock stars to cartoon characters. Whom—or what—would you honor? A relative, a much-loved book, or even your favorite snack—the marshmallow?

Draw us a stamp. We can't make your idea into a real postage stamp, but we'll print some of our favorites in the March/April 1997 issue.

Here's how to enter:

1 Trace the outline of the stamp above onto a piece of unlined white paper. Draw your design in the center of the stamp.

2 Explain why the person, place, or thing you drew deserves its own stamp.

3 Send your entry to Stamp Contest, *American Girl*, 8400 Fairway Place, Middleton, WI 53562.
DEADLINE: October 21, 1996.



Once Upon a Time



From left, Young Storytellers Jessica Bell, Michael Battle, Adam Davis, Venise Battle, and Alanna Carter.

Drums beat. Up steps Alanna Carter. "There once was a *tiger, terrible and tough*, who said, 'I don't think *tigers* are *stylish* enough. . . ." The story is by Gwendolyn Brooks, but the voice that bobs and weaves, casting a spell over the audience, is all Alanna.

For centuries, African Americans have been weaving history and wisdom into stories or poems told aloud, instead of recording them in books. Alanna, age 12, is a member of ARTS-US Young Storytellers, a group continuing the tradition by performing at schools, libraries, and festivals around St. Paul, Minnesota.

Most stories change a little each time they're told. Alanna tells one where a man goes out at midnight to trap a mule. Once, just for fun, she gave the man a "funny little nightcap and pj's." Now she tells it that way every time. Keeping a story alive and making it your own—that's what storytelling is all about!

Alanna's colorful top, called a *boubou*, is everyday wear in West African countries.



True Story

Lauren gets a baby brother—from Russia.



Dear American Girl,

My name is Lauren McAleer. About a year ago, my parents asked my sister, Jennifer, and me what we thought about adopting a new family member. Jennifer and I were a little unsure at first, but we soon realized what fun it would be to have a younger brother or sister.

My parents had heard about families adopting children from Russia. Before I knew it, we got a call from a lady named Svetlana, in Moscow. She told us there was a happy little four-year-old boy named Alexander who loved to sing and who needed a home. We were all excited to make the trip. After a few months we were on our way to pick him up.

On the plane, we kept looking at a picture of our new brother. When we reached Moscow, I was nervous and happy.

The next day we went to the orphanage to meet Alexander. He was so cute! He even sang us a song in Russian. He didn't speak English, so Svetlana's daughter Genny helped us communicate. I spent my tenth birthday in Moscow. That was the day we got approval to bring Alexander to America!

Now we know three other families who've adopted Russian children. We are all friends and we get the children together often. Alexander has grown so much in America. He is a busy little boy who often gets into my stuff. But that's O.K.!

Sincerely,

Lauren McAleer
Age 11, Winston-Salem,
North Carolina

Lauren painted this picture of a famous Russian cathedral while she was in Moscow.



AG

POLL



Your answers:

In the May/June issue, we asked you how much time you spend on the telephone every night. The majority of you gab only

0 to 5 minutes

Even if girls aren't on the phone for long, many families have special rules about telephone use. They include: no calls after 8:30 P.M., never tell callers you're home alone, and don't ignore "call-waiting!"

Next question:

It's the first day of school, and you've got to find some shoes to wear. In your closet are only two pairs: one is worn-out, boring, but comfy, and the other is pretty but painful to wear.

Which pair would you wear? You must choose! No wishy-washiness allowed!

A. Boring but comfy

B. Pretty but painful



Cut out your answers and mail them to us.



Write to Us!

Send your response to the AG Poll, along with your answers to other questions in Girls Express, to the address below. Include your name and birthday—date, month, and year.

AmericanGirl

Girls Express

8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562



Help Wanted!

Tell us about your favorite article of clothing. Is it a comfy sweater you love to curl up in, a fancy dress, your broken-in soccer shorts, or a special T-shirt you got on vacation? Send us a photograph of yourself wearing something you love, and tell us why it's special.



Cut out your answers and mail them to us.



Oh, Henry!

My last name is Henry, so I dressed as an Oh Henry! candy bar. My costume was made of felt sewn on half-inch-thick foam

lining. I wanted my younger brother to be a fun-size Oh Henry!, but he had his heart set on something else.

Elizabeth Henry
Age 12, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Off to See the Wizard

Since we live in Kansas, we thought it was fitting to dress as characters from *The Wizard of Oz*. From the left are Liz Alley, Lindsay Steiner, Emilee Crawford, me, and Katie Cecil as Auntie Em.

Maggie Meyer
Age 11, Overland Park, Kansas



Grandma and Grandpa

I wore my dad's old clothes, and my friend Elizabeth Schmitt got clothes from her grandma. We didn't see each other in costume until Halloween, and when we met we couldn't stop laughing! Our friends didn't even recognize us!

Jenny Farnam
Age 12, Waukesha, Wisconsin



Wipe Your Feet!

I was a rug. It was made of flowered material, fringe, felt, and ribbon. I got the idea from a parade I saw on TV.

Stefanie Barnes
Age 12, Oceanport, New Jersey



Candy Buttons

The pieces of candy were Styrofoam balls, cut in half, spray-painted, and hot-glued to poster board. On my head we used a bigger ball cut in half and glued to a headband. I won a costume contest at a local mall, and the clerks asked to take my picture!

Alexandra Datalo
Age 11, Wakefield, Massachusetts



Erin's Web

I won "Most Original" in my school's spook parade. The web is black felt with white ribbon sewn on. The spider on my head is made of panty hose with the legs stuffed and sewn shut.

Erin Means
Age 13, Cherokee, Oklahoma



Friend-wich

My friend Christina Arlt and I wanted to be witches, but then, as a joke, we thought we'd be sandwiches! The bread was cardboard covered with cotton batting. The tomato was painted cardboard, and the cheese was yellow foam rubber. Our green sweatshirts were the lettuce.

Elsbeth Pancrazi
Age 13, Leonia, New Jersey

Send photos of your Halloween costumes to Girls Express!



Stepfamilies

What should you call your stepdad? How do you deal with a new big sister? Girls share tips on blending two families into one.



I had a problem liking my stepfather at first.

I didn't want another person in my life, and I missed my real father a lot! After months of living with my stepfather, I realized he cared for us in every way. The more time I spent with him, the more I loved him.

Nicole Breadhead
Age 11, Keaau, Hawaii



I used to think my stepfather wanted to

replace my dad. I didn't talk to him very much. My mom said, "He's not trying to replace your dad, he's just trying to be *like* a dad. Try talking to him." I did, and now we talk a lot together.

Allison Crandall
Age 9, Suwanee, Georgia



I had problems sharing my dad with my step-

mother's kids. I told my dad how I felt and we found ways to be together. We shoot hoops, play chess, and walk the dog.



Allison Krizel
Age 10, Branchburg, New Jersey



When I first met my stepsisters, it was like having

friends stay at my house. But after a while we fought like most sisters do. I started wishing everything was the way it used to be. Then I realized my stepsisters must be going through the same thing. We talked it over as a family, and now we are close.

Heather Cunningham
Age 12, Summerville, South Carolina



My mother got married, and my stepdad has two

children younger than I am. They get on my nerves once in a while, but it's nice to know that two kids look up to me.

Kaiman Hardy
Age 10, Brooklyn, New York



When my dad remarried I assumed my step-

mother would be mean, like in *Cinderella*. Later I decided I was sick of being her enemy and gave her another chance. I discovered she was really a nice person. My advice is to let the new person show you who they really are.

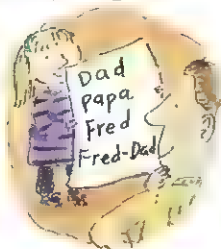


Madelynn Bruken
Age 11, Burlington, Vermont



At first it's hard to know what to call your stepparent.

You don't *have* to call them "Mom" or "Dad." You can use their first name. My stepdad says I can call him anything I want, except something mean!



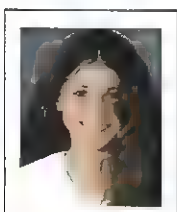
Brandi Majeski
Age 11, Milton, Florida



I love my stepdad and decided to call him "Dad."

My real dad didn't like it. I love him, too, and I didn't want to hurt his feelings. I realized it's not my fault I have two fathers. We're just children trying to live with our parents' choices.

Nicole House
Age 10, Paso Robles, California



I knew that with my father getting remarried, he

would never get back together with my mom. But when I saw how happy my dad was, it made me happy, too.

Anna Rappaport
Age 11, Piedmont, California



My dad remarried a wonderful lady. Instead

of looking for her to replace my mom, I think of her as an addition to the family. She's a new friend.

Sarah Stagner
Age 12, Huntsville, Alabama



When I got a stepsister, we started a scrap-

book of pictures and things we did together. Now when we get jealous of each other, we look through the book and think, "If I didn't have a stepsister, those times would never have happened."



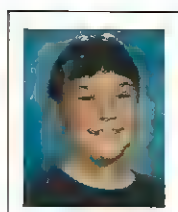
Erika Hysell
Age 12, Red Bank, Tennessee



When new people join your family, try to be open-

minded. Look for the good things in them. If you only pay attention to the bad things, you'll never know how much fun you might have.

Elan Oresley
Age 11, Cleveland, Ohio



I don't consider my stepbrother, stepdad, and step-

sister just a "step" family. They are part of my family. I love them even if they're not flesh and blood. That's what matters.

Stephanie Shockley
Age 12, Gig Harbor, Washington

Speak from Your Heart

Next subject: Stereotyping—it's judging a book by its cover. For example, some people think if a girl's quiet, she's stuck-up. Have you ever been stereotyped? Fill in the blanks: "Just because I'm _____, people think I'm _____."

How did you feel? Have you ever stereotyped someone else?

Send your answers, name, age, and a school picture to:

AmericanGirl
8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

Deadline: October 7, 1996.

Some answers will appear in the March/April Issue. ★







MOLLY and the MOVIE STAR

*By Valerie Tripp
Illustrated by Nick Backus*

A big idea and a missing sock bring Molly to the brink of disaster.

Molly McIntire burst into the kitchen running so fast her brown braids stuck straight out behind her.

"Guess what!" she exclaimed. "My class is collecting money to buy a War Bond at the big rally a week from Saturday, and I'm going to give the money to Melody Moore! Can you believe it?"

"My goodness!" said Mom.

Mrs. Gilford, the housekeeper, asked, "Who's Melody Moore?"

Molly gasped. "You mean you don't know?" she said. "Melody Moore is a famous movie star. She's coming to our town. Everybody will come to the rally to see her, and she'll sing and dance and make everybody feel

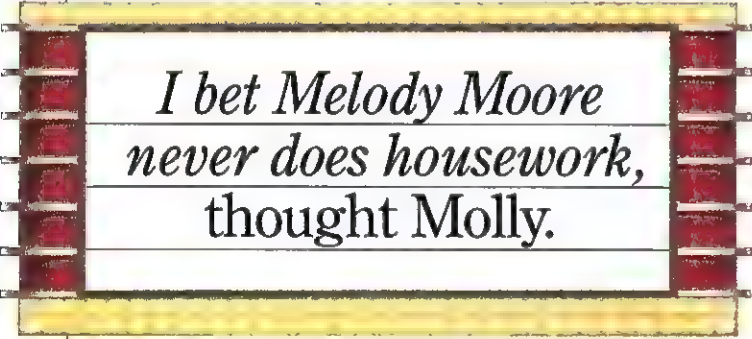
patriotic and happy so they'll buy War Bonds."

"Well," Mrs. Gilford began, "War Bonds are a good thing, but—"

"Oh, I know!" interrupted Molly proudly. "That's how I was chosen to give our money to Melody Moore. I explained War Bonds the best of anyone in my class. I said you buy a War Bond for eighteen dollars and seventy-five cents. The government uses the money to buy things for our soldiers. But the government is really only borrowing the money, because in ten years you can take your War Bond to a bank and get twenty-five dollars for it."

"Very good!" said Mom.

"As I was saying," Mrs. Gilford went on firmly, "War Bonds are good. But I don't see why the rallies have to be flimflam shows, with glamour girls singing and all. People should buy the bonds to help our fighting boys because it's the right thing to do."



*I bet Melody Moore
never does housework,
thought Molly.*

"Yes! Well!" said Mom. "How much money are you supposed to bring in, Molly?"

"About a dollar, I guess," said Molly. "I have fifty cents in my bank I can use."

"And you can use your movie money for tomorrow and next Saturday," added Mom.

"Oh, no," said Molly. "I have to go to the movie tomorrow. Melody Moore is in it. I'll earn the money I need for the War Bond. I'll

put on a show, or paint the garage, or—"

"You can do chores," said Mrs. Gilford. "If you mop the kitchen floor, sort the laundry, polish the silver, and rake the Victory Garden, I'd say that would be worth fifty cents."

Molly frowned. Chores were dull. She wanted to do something exciting to earn the money.

But Mom was already saying, "Molly, I'll give you the money Friday if Mrs. Gilford says you've done the chores to her satisfaction."

"O.K.," Molly sighed. *Anyway, the chores will be easy*, she thought.

The next day, when Molly went to the movies with her friends Linda and Susan, she was very glad she had not given up her movie money. As the movie began, Molly shivered with pleasure. There was Melody Moore on the screen, larger than life, wearing a Red Cross nurse's uniform! *Oh*, thought Molly, *I can't wait till I meet Melody Moore.*

After the movie, the girls walked to the McIntires' house. "Well, girls. How was the movie?" Mrs. Gilford asked.

"Melody Moore was great," Molly said. "She was so brave when she was taking care of the soldiers in the field hospital."

"I loved it when she and the other nurses sang and danced for the soldiers," said Linda.

All three girls sang the song from the movie: "I'm a soldier in the army of loo-ove. . . ."

Mrs. Gilford muttered, "Nurses singing and dancing. Nonsense!"

Susan said, "There's one thing I don't get. Why didn't Melody Moore tell that tall soldier before he left that she loved him? Why did

she hide a letter in his sock in his duffel bag?"

"Because!" exclaimed Molly. "You can't go around blabbing to someone that you love him! Hiding the letter in his sock was much more romantic."

"Oh," said Susan. "But that other nurse, the one with fingernail polish, kissed him before he left. I was afraid he was going to fall in love with her instead of Melody Moore."

"Of course not," said Molly. "He loved Melody Moore from the first moment he saw her. He fell in love with her when she did that special salute." Molly tilted her head, winked, saluted, and twirled on her toes.

"Gosh, Molly," said Linda. "You do that salute exactly like Melody Moore!"

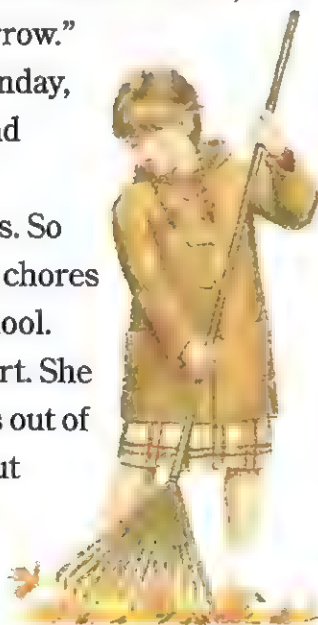
"Yes," sighed Susan. "Molly, you are so lucky. I just can't believe you're really, truly going to meet Melody Moore at the rally."

"The point of the rally is to buy War Bonds, not to ogle movie stars," said Mrs. Gilford. "Molly hasn't even begun to earn the money she's supposed to give to the War Bond fund."

Molly said quickly, "I'll do the chores, Mrs. Gilford. I'll start tomorrow."

But the next day, Sunday, Susan invited Molly and Linda over to listen to Melody Moore records. So Molly didn't begin her chores until Monday after school. She got off to a bad start. She tried to rake the leaves out of the Victory Garden, but the wind kept blowing them back in.

When Mrs. Gilford



came to check on her work, Molly said crossly, "I shouldn't be working outside in this weather. What if I catch a cold? I don't want Melody Moore to see me with a red nose."

"Rake harder," said Mrs. Gilford. "That'll warm you up."

As the days passed, the indoor chores didn't go much better.

Mrs. Gilford made Molly polish the silver twice, because it was streaky the first time.

Molly had to mop the kitchen floor twice, too, because she forgot to rinse it the first time.

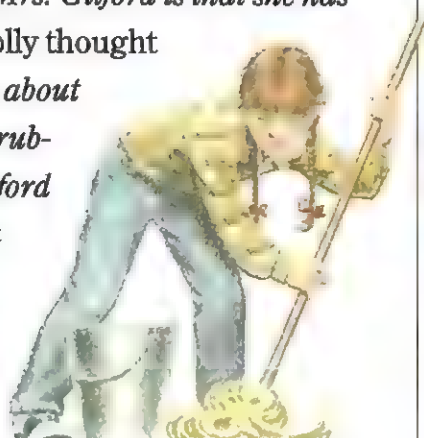
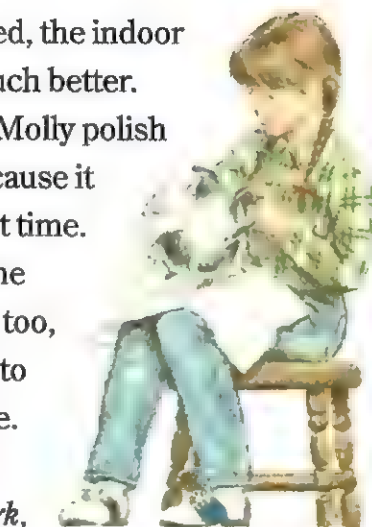
I bet Melody Moore

never does housework,

thought Molly. She held the mop as if it were a microphone and looked at her reflection in the toaster. "I'm a soldier in the army of loo-ove," she sang.

Molly stopped. Mrs. Gilford was standing in the doorway watching her. "Molly," she said sternly, "the trouble with you is that you are so caught up with your imaginary movie friends, you can't keep your mind on the task before you."

The trouble with Mrs. Gilford is that she has no imagination, Molly thought later. *She only cares about boring things like scrubbing floors. Mrs. Gilford could never be like a heroine in a movie. She could never do anything brave or dramatic. Never.*



On Friday morning, Mom asked, "How did Molly do with the chores, Mrs. Gilford?" Molly stood still. She was not sure what Mrs. Gilford would say.

"Well," said Mrs. Gilford, "she hasn't sorted the laundry yet."

Mom turned to Molly. "You'll sort the laundry after school, won't you, Molly?"

"Yes," answered Molly.

"Then here's the money you earned," said Mom, handing two quarters to Molly.

"Thanks, Mom," said Molly. She hurried off to school to add her dollar to the War Bond fund. Her teacher, Miss Campbell, replaced all the change with dollar bills. She put the bills in an envelope and handed it to Molly.

"We're trusting you to take care of this money, Molly," said Miss Campbell. "We're proud that you'll represent us at the War Bond rally."

Molly put the envelope in her book bag and buckled it securely. She held the book bag with both hands as she walked to Susan's house after school. She kept the bag next to her while she and Linda and Susan listened to Melody Moore records. She held it tight as she ran home, just in time for dinner.

Mrs. Gilford met her with a grim look. "You forgot about sorting the laundry."

"Oh!" said Molly. "Whoops! I'm sorry."

"I hope so," said Mrs. Gilford. "I'm going now. Your sister Jill is in charge until your mother gets home, which will be very late. After dinner, I want you to sort the laundry. Put everything that needs to be mended in the basket. Your mother can drop the mending off at my house tomorrow morning on the way to



the rally. She has to go early. I have no wish to go to that circus of a rally myself." Mrs. Gilford tied her scarf under her chin in a tight knot. "It'll do you good to have a task tonight. It'll keep your mind off this Melanie Moon nonsense."

"Melody Moore," said Molly.

"Whatever," said Mrs. Gilford. Then she left.

After dinner, Molly's sister Jill and her brothers Ricky and Brad went into the living room to listen to a radio program. Molly felt rather forlorn in the kitchen all by herself, sorting the clean laundry into piles. Almost all of Ricky's socks went into the mending pile to be darned. Molly wiggled her finger through a hole in the heel of one sock. *It's a good thing the sock Melody Moore hid her love note in didn't have a hole like this*, she thought.

Suddenly, Molly had an inspiration. She could put the War Bond money in a sock and

hand the sock to Melody Moore at the rally tomorrow! That way Melody Moore would know she had seen her movie. And Molly could do her special tilt, wink, salute, and twirl, too. Melody Moore would love it! She would say, "Molly McIntire, you're a star!" Putting the money in a sock was a great idea!

Quickly, Molly ran upstairs with one of Ricky's socks that didn't have a hole. She took the envelope with the money, folded it, and put it in the toe of the sock. It was perfect! It was just like in the movie! Molly stood in front of her mirror and practiced handing the sock to Melody Moore and saluting her special salute over and over. Tilt, wink, salute, twirl. Tilt, wink, salute, twirl. Finally, she put the sock on her chair with her clothes, so she would not forget it the next morning. She went to bed humming, "I'm a soldier in the army of loo-ove!"

Molly was too nervous to sleep well. She was half awake when her mother came in to kiss her goodnight. By the time Molly woke up the next morning, Mom had already left the house.

This is it! thought Molly. *This is the day I meet a movie star!* She jumped out of bed. When she looked at her chair, she froze in horror. The sock! The sock with the money was gone! Frantically, Molly threw everything off the chair. She looked under the chair, under the bed, in the closet, then under the chair again. Nothing.

She ran down the hall into Ricky's room and began tossing socks out of his drawer. "Ricky, wake up!" she shouted. "Did you take one of your socks out of my room last night?"

"No," said Ricky. "What's—" But Molly was already gone.

She flew down the stairs to the kitchen. Jill was sitting at the table, calmly drinking juice. "Jill!" gasped Molly. "Did you take one of Ricky's socks out of my room last night?"

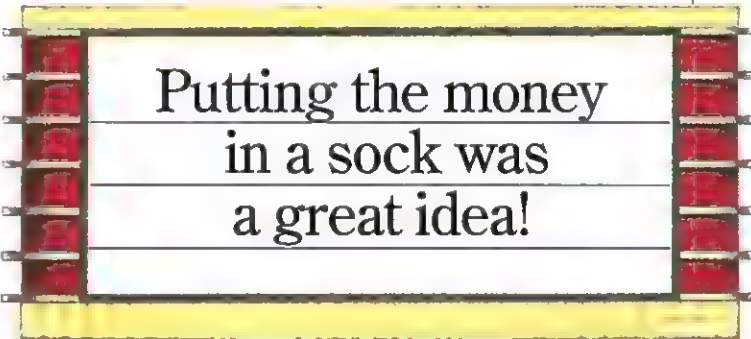
"No," said Jill.

"Where could it be?" wailed Molly. "I hid the money for my class's War Bond in the sock, and now it's gone!"

"What?" exclaimed Jill. "Why did you put the money in a sock?"

"I wanted it to be like in Melody Moore's movie," said Molly.

Jill sighed. "You and your big ideas," she said. "Well, let's search the house. The sock has to be here somewhere."



Putting the money in a sock was a great idea!

Molly and Jill started searching and did not stop until they'd looked in every nook and cranny of the house. Even Ricky and Brad helped them search. Finally, they gave up. The sock was nowhere to be found.

"What am I going to do?" moaned Molly.

"You'll have to go to the rally and explain what happened," said Ricky.

"I can't!" said Molly. "I'd rather die than tell Melody Moore what I did!"

"Write her a confession note," Jill said.

"Yeah," said Ricky. "Hide it in a sock."

"No!" said Molly and Jill together.

"But what'll I tell my class?" Molly asked.

"They'll all hate me."

"Tell them you'll pay the money back," said Ricky. "If you don't go to the movies for two hundred weeks, which is about four years, you'll have twenty dollars. Then you can pay back the money you lost."

"Well," sighed Molly. "After this, I don't think I'll ever want to go to the movies again for the rest of my life."

As soon as Molly's note was ready, she and Jill and Brad and Ricky left for the rally. Molly felt as if she were marching to her execution as they walked to the high school football field.

Molly took her seat on the stage that was set up at one end of the field and looked out at the crowd. She felt hot with shame and cold with fear. She slid her confession note out of her pocket and re-read it. "Miss Moore," it said. "Please don't read this out loud. I lost my class's money. I will pay it back. I am sorry. Your fan, Molly McIntire."

Just then, the crowd started to murmur. An Army jeep stopped at the edge of the field. Molly held her breath as the crowd started to cheer. Because there she was! There was Melody Moore, smiling and waving and walking through the crowd. She looked as beautiful as she did in the movies!

Melody Moore danced up the steps of the stage and flashed a huge smile. The crowd whistled and clapped and yelled. The band played "I'm a soldier in the army of loo-ove," and everyone sang along with Melody

Moore. Everyone, that is, except Molly. She was too miserable.

Then Melody Moore held her hands up for quiet. "I'm so pleased to be here," she said. "I know everyone in town wants to buy a War Bond today, especially the children of Willow Street School. Let's give these kids a hand!"

The crowd clapped and shouted. The band played a drumroll as a cute kindergartner handed an envelope to Melody Moore. The drummer hit the cymbals, and the crowd whooped and whistled when Melody Moore kissed the little first-grader who handed her an envelope. Everyone laughed and cheered for the second-grader who shook Melody Moore's hand too long. Molly could hardly breathe. Her turn was next! She stood up to walk across the stage toward Melody Moore. The drums began to roll. The crowd quieted. *If only the world would end now*, Molly thought.

HONK! blasted the horn of the jeep. Molly just about jumped out of her skin. Everyone looked over at the jeep. HONK! HONK! The

**Molly looked and
gasped. It was
Mrs. Gilford!**

jeep nosed its way through the crowd, honking wildly. People jostled one another to clear a path. Molly looked and gasped. She could not believe her eyes. It was Mrs. Gilford! *Mrs. Gilford?* thought Molly. *What on earth is she*



doing here? Mrs. Gilford looked like the fearless general of an invading army. She was standing up in the jeep next to the driver. With one hand she held on to the windshield, and with the other hand she waved something over her head.

"Miss Moon!" Mrs. Gilford called out dramatically. "Stop immediately!"

The jeep pulled up next to the stage, and Mrs. Gilford climbed out. She strode up the steps with determination, nodded briskly to Melody Moore, and said, "Just a moment, Miss Moon." Then she walked straight over to Molly and handed her Ricky's sock. "Your mother picked up this sock by mistake and brought it to my house with the mending," Mrs. Gilford said. "I knew how important it was as soon as I saw it."

Molly was flooded with joy and relief. "Oh, Mrs. Gilford, thank you!" she whispered.

Mrs. Gilford smiled at Molly and gave her a nudge toward Melody Moore. "Go along, now," she said. "Your movie star is waiting."

Molly flew across the stage and handed Melody Moore the sock.

Melody Moore laughed. She pulled the envelope out of the sock, opened it, and waved the money at the crowd. She smiled at Molly.

"I can see that you're a real fan!" she said. "What's your name, sweetheart?"

"Molly McIntire," said Molly.

"Well, thank you, Molly," said Melody Moore. "And thank your grandmother, too."

"Oh, she's not my grandmother," said Molly. "That's Mrs. Gilford. She's my . . . she's my friend." *Good old Mrs. Gilford*, Molly thought. *She came to my rescue, just like a heroine in a movie.* Molly smiled at Mrs. Gilford, then turned to Melody Moore. Molly tilted her head, winked, saluted, and twirled on her toes. Melody Moore did the same thing right back, and the audience exploded into applause.

"Molly McIntire," said Melody Moore, "you're a star!" ★

Meet the Author

Valerie Tripp

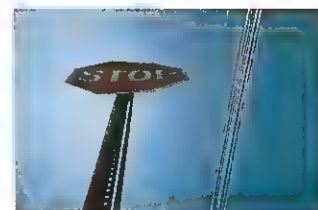
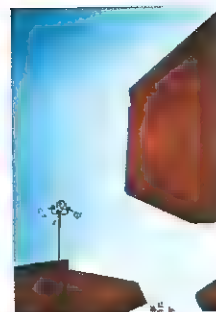
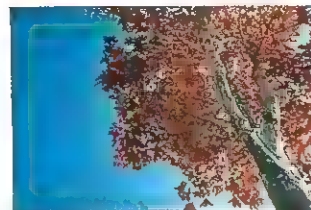


When I was little, my sisters and I loved to go to the movies on rainy Saturday afternoons. I can imagine how excited Molly must have been about meeting a movie star. It was a dream come true. It would have been for me back then, I'm sure.

Valerie Tripp is the author of the Molly books in The American Girls Collection.



1



2



3

Photo Finish

Last year the National PTA held a photography contest with the theme "Just Open Your Eyes and See." Here are five of the winners and the stories behind them.



4

1

"The cow surprised me by looking through the window. It definitely opened its eyes and saw me!"

Christina Zayas
Age 10, Cherry Hill,
New Jersey

2

"I titled my photos 'Just Open Your Eyes and See Through an Ant's Eyes.' I used my camera and lay down on the ground. My favorite photo is of the tree. It's the ant's favorite, too."

Sloan Schmidtke
Age 8, Birmingham, Alabama

3

"This is a double exposure. First I took a picture of a page in a book, *The Rainbow Goblins*. Then I rewound the film one frame. Next I posed my sister Leslie in front of a dark blanket looking up at the sky and photographed her on the same frame."

Andrea Leonard
Age 12, Carrollton, Texas

4

"I called this 'Just Open Your Eyes and See the Light.' We were taking down Christmas lights. The room was kind of dark, and the lights just lit up my sister Erin's face."

Leandra Hicks
Age 8, Evansville, Indiana

5

"It was October and we had a surprise snowstorm. I saw the pumpkins and thought 'One pumpkin can open its eyes and see, but the others can't!'"

Alison Niemi
Age 8, North Liberty, Indiana



5

To find out how you can enter next year's contest, turn the page.

Here’s How

Take Better Pictures

Try these easy tips and see what develops!

The Basics

When you’re ready to take the picture, press the shutter button down as smoothly as you can.

Viewfinder

Keep your eyes open when you take the picture.

Shutter button

Make sure your fingers don’t cover the camera lens!

Lens

Hold your camera with both hands.

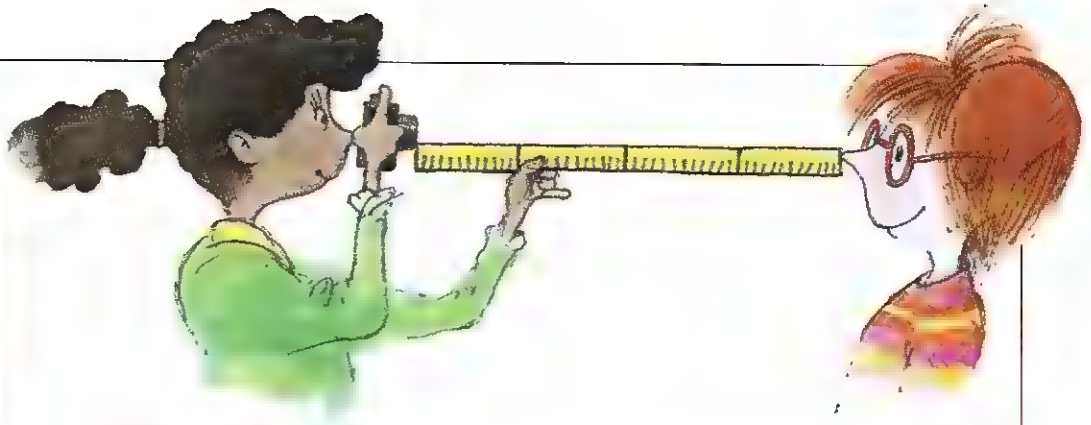
Keep your arms in close to your sides to hold the camera steady.





Get the Red Out

Sometimes people's eyes look red in pictures. Ask them to look slightly away from the camera lens, and the red-eye problem will be cured.



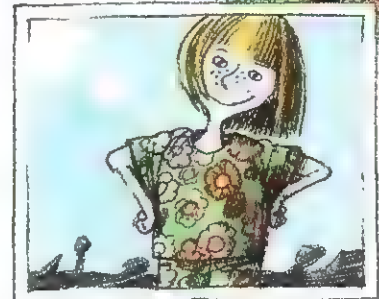
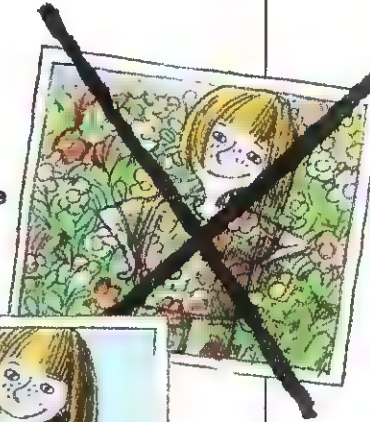
Come In Close

Don't try to squeeze too much stuff into one photo. Sometimes it's best to move in for a close-up. Four feet away is as close as you can get with most cameras.



Keep It Simple

Backgrounds are important! Keep the background as simple as you can.



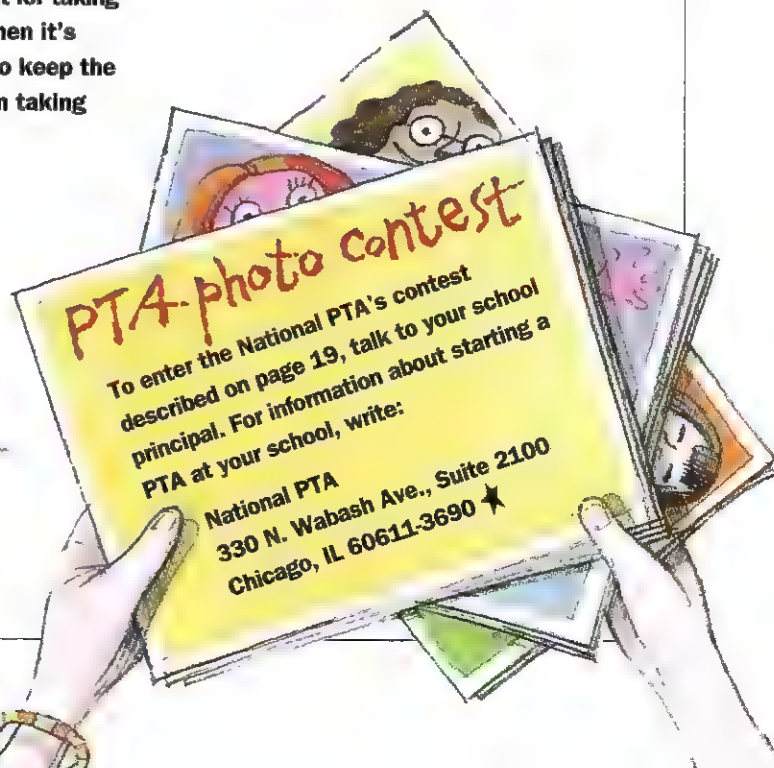
Weather or Not

Cloudy days are great for taking pictures outside. When it's sunny out, be sure to keep the sun behind you when taking a picture.



High and Low

Try taking pictures from different heights. Look at the world from different angles!



PTA photo contest

To enter the National PTA's contest described on page 19, talk to your school principal. For information about starting a PTA at your school, write:

National PTA
330 N. Wabash Ave., Suite 2100
Chicago, IL 60611-3690 ★

Make this school year the best ever with *head to toe* tips and tricks you'll use from dawn to dusk!



Don't drag your tail!

Get everything ready the night before. Try these tricks:

- Think "head, shoulders, knees, and toes" as you're gathering your things, so

you'll remember everything from top to toe.

- Roll up a whole outfit together: shirt, jeans, socks, even a favorite scrunchie. Try rolling up a whole week's worth of outfits!

Where are you headed?

American girls in nearly 2,000 schools will follow a year-round schedule this year. Instead of getting one long summer vacation, these girls get many shorter breaks throughout the year.

Is year-round school for you? Here's what girls said in a survey posted on the *American Girl* Web site.

71% think year-round school is a bad idea.

29% think year-round school is cool.



BRAIN FOOD

Breakfast is smart food. Try these ideas for your morning meal:

- Cream cheese and jelly rolled up in a warm tortilla
- "If you like bananas on cereal, reverse it!" says Rachel Hagey of Grand Prairie, Texas. "Get your favorite cereal and dunk your banana in it!"

Back up!

Before you buy, see if the backpack you're looking at can pass this test with all "yes" answers:

- Does it have a shiny, waterproof coating inside to protect your stuff from the rain?
- Is it made of a tough fabric like cordura nylon so your pens won't poke through it?
- Are all clasps and zippers easy to open?

Legwork

How long does it take you to get from your door to the bus stop when you walk? At your fastest run? Time yourself both ways. You'll be glad to know this information on mornings when every minute matters!

Face it!

Nervous? Face your fears by playing the "What if?" game with a parent, sibling, or friend. Challenge yourself to think of as many "what ifs" as you can: What if you miss the bus? What if you can't find the classroom? Together you can answer the questions—or find someone who can.

HANDY DANDY

One of the best school supplies you can buy this year is mini Post-it notes. Use them to:

- Mark assignments in your textbook.
- Highlight important sections of library books without making permanent marks.
- Post reminders on your light switch to switch on your memory.

PUT YOUR BEST FOOT FORWARD

Add sparkle to your step without spending an arm and a leg.

- Textured tights make ordinary outfits extraordinary.
- Colorful shoelaces brighten shoes—and hair if you use the laces as ribbons.
- Two pairs of colored socks are better than one! Put both socks on, then fold the inside sock over the outside sock, making a cool cuff.



HEAD of the CLASS

Learn more, worry less, think straight. It's all in a school day's work!

WORKING HAND-IN-HAND

Working with a partner or in a group? Once your group has an idea, write a "Project Pledge" to keep everyone on track. Your pledge should include:

- the goal of the project
- the specific job each group member will do
- check-in times, when each group member will report on her progress
- a promise to listen to and respect everyone's ideas.

An armful of fun

Keep your books looking clean and bright by making creative covers out of these materials:

- an old plastic tablecloth
- pretty wrapping paper reinforced with clear contact paper
- a collage of magazine photos picturing your personality—or the book's subject—glued to white paper or a grocery bag



Learn it by heart

Try this trick to remember the 9 times table. Look at the answer column. The left side counts up: 0, 1, 2, 3, etc. The right side counts down: 9, 8, 7, 6, etc.

$9 \times 1 =$	9
$9 \times 2 =$	18
$9 \times 3 =$	27
$9 \times 4 =$	36
$9 \times 5 =$	45
$9 \times 6 =$	54
$9 \times 7 =$	63
$9 \times 8 =$	72
$9 \times 9 =$	81

Be on your toes!

Does your head spin every time you're called on in class? Focus your thoughts with these suggestions.

- Sit up front where you can see and hear clearly.
- Keep your eyes on your teacher.
- Think a minute before raising your hand. Exactly what is it that you want to ask or contribute?
- Speak slowly and clearly when it's your turn to talk.



BRAINSTORM!

Looking for creative ways to present a project or report?

Here are some grade-A ideas from AG readers.



For a book report my friend and I did a talk show. She played all the characters in the book, and I interviewed her. We had a theme song and cool props, too.

Colleen Murray
Age 11, Corning, New York



For my report on ballet, I pretended to be a bus driver taking my class on a field trip to see the *Nutcracker*. Before the performance, I taught them the history of ballet and basic terms and positions.

Jordan Walker
Age 11, Austin, Texas



I made an archaeology pit by filling a Tupperware container with sand. As the archaeologist, I dug up a rubber dog bone, a crock with scrolls, and even a papier-mâché mummy that I unwrapped!

Erica Haas
Age 12, Alpharetta, Georgia

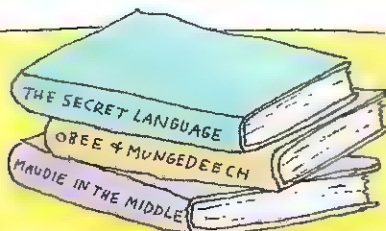


I felt most proud of my report on Braille. I used paint to make real Braille dots. Everyone wanted to touch them!

Ashley Lipton
Age 11, Saratoga, California

GET A LEG UP ON READING

Here are some great books that are fun to read. They'll give you a head start on book reports, too!



The Secret Language, by Ursula Nordstrom. Two girls cope at boarding school by creating their own language.

Obbe & Mungedeek, by Trude Martin. A newborn girl discovers that all babies can talk. Eleven years later, the fun story continues.

Maudie in the Middle, by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor. Growing up in a big family in the 1900s, Maudie wants attention, but finds trouble.

Want new books but don't have the money? Lane Claghorn of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has this advice: "Have a book swap! Tell a few friends to bring in books that are in good condition and are appropriate for your age. Pretty soon you'll have a couple dozen books—to trade and read. On your mark, get set, SWAP!"



Lunch Bunch

Share good times, new foods, and tasty twists on old favorites!

Tickle a Funny Bone

Pack more fun into your lunch period.

Play "Count Me In!"

Count who has the most French fries, pretzels, or raisins. Which is more popular: chocolate milk or white? How many kids drink through a straw? Count kids at your table or in the whole lunchroom!

Play "Second Guessing."

Have your friend turn away from the lunchroom clock. Then have her guess when 15 seconds, 30 seconds, or a minute have passed.

Tell a few jokes.

Q What did one math book say to the other math book?

A I have a lot of problems.

Q Who's your best friend at school?

A Your princi-pal.

Q What tree grows at every grade school?

A The elemen-tree



MOUTH-WATERING MENU IDEAS

Lunch specials by AG readers:

Spread it on!

Make spreads for breads out of:

- Cream cheese, brown sugar, and nuts
- Cream cheese and olives

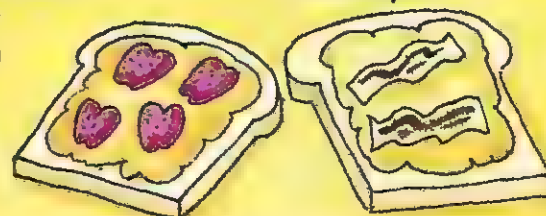
- Cream cheese and raisins
- Mashed avocado, shredded carrots, and sunflower seeds

PB and what?

AG readers like to eat sandwiches made with peanut butter and:

- sliced bananas
- brown sugar
- honey
- bacon

- sliced apples
- raisins
- jelly
- fresh strawberries
- applesauce
- cream cheese
- Rice Krispies



tongue-tied?

Sitting with someone new? Start a conversation by asking questions that can't be answered with just a "yes" or "no."

- If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?

- Describe your idea of a perfect birthday party.
- What's the funniest dream you've ever had?
- If you could have lunch with someone famous, who would it be?

HAVE A HEART!

Say it out loud! Make lunchtime and recess better for everyone with these thoughtful words:

1. Come sit by us.
2. Let's play together.
3. You go first.
4. You did really well this morning.
5. I'll show you where it is.
6. That's not funny. It's mean.
7. Thanks!
8. You're welcome.
9. We can share it.
10. There's always room for more.

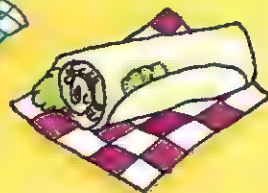


Try these creative combinations!

- Turkey and jelly sandwich
- Peanut butter and raisins rolled into a tortilla
- Tuna, honey Dijon mustard, and cheese on toast



- Mini subs from hot-dog buns
- Salad Sandwich: cucumber, tomatoes, and lettuce on bread
- Bologna Burrito: bologna, salsa, lettuce, and cheese wrapped in a tortilla



Sweet stop

Top off your lunch with these tasty treats!

- Orange rounds made from orange slices with a bit of lemon juice and sugar sprinkled on top
- Mini-marshmallows stuck on pretzel sticks
- Chocolate-covered animal crackers

AFTER-SCHOOL ACTION

Flexing your body's muscles boosts your brain's energy, too.

Put your heart in it!

Here are the top twelve ways girls get their hearts pumping: bike riding, swimming, in-line skating, roller-skating, softball, basketball, bowling, soccer, exercise walking, ice-skating, hiking, volleyball. Try one or all twelve!

Shake a leg!

Use this stretch to loosen up before doing any activity that involves running:

Place your left foot forward while flexing your right knee. Bend forward at your waist, keeping your left leg straight. Now slowly tap your left toe up and down. You should feel a stretch in the back of your left leg and the front of your right. Bend your knee deeper to get a deeper stretch.

Then shake your legs out, switch foot positions and repeat.



A PAT ON THE BACK

Boost your team's spirit and welcome the other team with this cheerful chant:

Win or lose, we're here to say
we hope we all play well
today!

We wish you well!
We think you're swell!
Good luck, [name of team],
good luck!

Competing neck and neck?

Be sure competition brings out the best in you! Girls who visited the AG Web site gave this advice on how to be a good sport.

"Always try to have team spirit. You can make someone feel good even if they're not the greatest player in the world!"
Amanda, age 12, Iowa

"When you've lost a big game you can recover by thinking about the next game and practicing."
Danielle, Jana, and Brittany, all age 9, Connecticut

"The real losers are the ones that brag about winning. They lose in friendship. Good sports make good friends."
Emily, age 11, Alaska

Cold Feet

If you play too hard and end up with a sore muscle or bruise, try using a bag of frozen peas to cool the spot and reduce any pain.

HOMework HELPERs

Take the hard work out of homework with these helpful hints.

Put your nose to the grindstone

When studying for a test, follow these suggestions to help you make the grade.

- Think like a teacher: if you were giving the test, what would you want your students to know? Make a sample test—then take it!
- Act like a teacher: tutoring someone else can help you learn information, too!

TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

Math problems? Ask an expert for help with this on-line homework hotline:
<http://forum.swarthmore.edu/dr.math/dr-math.html>

Mind games

Trick yourself into learning!

- Use Scrabble tiles to make crossword puzzles with your spelling words.
- Turn playing cards into a math flashcard game. Remove all face cards, then deal two numbered cards at a time. See how fast you can multiply the two numbers!
- Stick Post-it notes to your mirror with words or dates you have to learn. Study while you brush your teeth!
- Set a timer for studying each subject. Limiting your time may actually help you be more productive.

Need more elbow room?

Make sure your study space is organized.

- Store pens, highlighters, and scissors in a fun mug.
- Use an egg carton to hold paper clips, thumbtacks, rubber bands, and erasers.
- Stack milk crates for extra shelf space.
- Recycle an old backpack by filling it with last year's report cards, tests, and school projects.

- Sift through paper piles and decide whether to toss or save. Post valuable lists or ideas on a bulletin board. Throw out what you don't need. It's just as important to get rid of what you don't use as it is to save the things you do!

SINK YOUR TEETH IN!

If you snack while you study, a cored apple filled with peanut butter makes a neat treat. Use a sports bottle for your drink so you won't spill on your papers.

And don't forget to have a hunger for knowledge, too! Learning is an adventure that'll last your whole life. Go make this year your grreatest one yet! ★



Step in Time

Back-to-school time means new shoes for many American girls. Take a stroll through history to see where some favorite foot fashions of 1996 got their start.



1600s

Deerskin **moccasins** protected the feet of American Indian girls in rain, mud, and snow. In these shoes, Indians could move very quietly and quickly. Moccasins were also very comfortable because the soft skin took the shape of the foot inside. Fur, dyed porcupine quills, and glass beads decorated both everyday moccasins and those worn for special occasions.



1700s

Colonial girls wore "single-**lasted**" shoes, or "straights," that didn't come as right- and left-footed shoes. Why? People thought straight shoes looked better than "crooked" ones. And since the shoes were identical, a girl could alternate them so they'd wear more evenly and last longer.



1860s

The first real **sneakers** appeared in 1868 and were known as "croquet sandals." At \$6 a pair, only the wealthiest girls could afford them. Luckily, by 1899 people could buy a nice pair for just 60 cents.



1890s

Because tiny feet were considered ladylike during Victorian days, fashionable girls squeezed their feet into **high-button boots** as small as possible. Long-handled buttonhooks were used to fasten the many tiny buttons. It took a long time. If girls didn't work quickly, they'd be late for school!



1900s

Mary Janes were named for a character in the popular newspaper comic strip *Buster Brown*. The single-strapped shoes Mary Jane wore had been a favorite style among girls for many years. Mary Jane was inspired by the artist's daughter and named after his wife.



1930s

Saddle oxfords were the shoe of choice among girls dancing the jitterbug in the 1930s. The style remained a hit through the 1950s. In some cities, girls wore only blue-and-white shoes, while boys wore the black-and-white style. Brown-and-white saddle shoes were worn by both girls and boys at that time.



Today

In the 1990s, the focus for shoes is on interesting textures—like this “mock croc” patent leather—and unusual “hardware” like these kissing fish. **Loafers**, based on the design of the moccasin, are one of today's most popular styles.



1940s

During World War Two, leather was rationed, or used sparingly, so there would be enough for soldiers' boots. Many people wore **non-ration shoes** instead, which were made out of cotton, canvas, or corduroy as shown here. And because rubber was also needed for war equipment, the soles of some shoes on the home front were made from straw, cork, and even soybeans!



These **sneakers** were inspired by high-performance hiking boots and rugged rock-climbing shoes. With durable treads, thick laces, and playful colors, these sturdy sneakers are fun *and* fashionable!



Girls today wouldn't dream of wearing **boots** too small. In the future, all shoes may feel as good as they look. Some stores now use electronic scanners to measure their customers' feet. A girl can then choose a style, material, and color from a computer to get the fit that's perfect for her! ★



1970s

While eating his breakfast one morning, a Nike company owner realized that his waffle's texture might provide excellent traction for the sole of a sneaker. He created the first Waffle sole by pouring rubber into his own waffle iron! Soon, the waffle pattern was ubiquitous on **running shoes**.

No wonder you need shoes to protect your feet—the average person takes 10,000 steps a day!



Craft

Reuse Old Blues

Turn worn-out jeans into something cool—a pocket to use in your locker at school!

Don't have a locker? Stick your pocket on the fridge! To decorate, attach buttons with fabric paint and add dots. Glue on colorful rickrack.

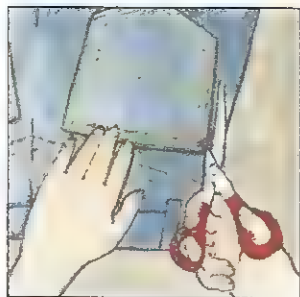
Tie a ribbon bow and glue it in the middle. Glue 4 short ribbon pieces across for a weave effect.


Photo: Mike Walker Illustrations: Judy Pellikan

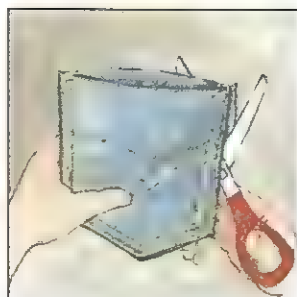
YOU WILL NEED

-  An adult to help you
- Pair of old jeans
- Scissors
- 4 small magnets
- Craft glue
- Ribbon, buttons, and other trim

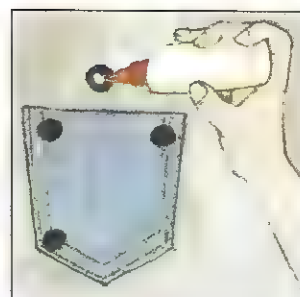
Glue a ribbon across the top, and glue or iron on a pretty patch!



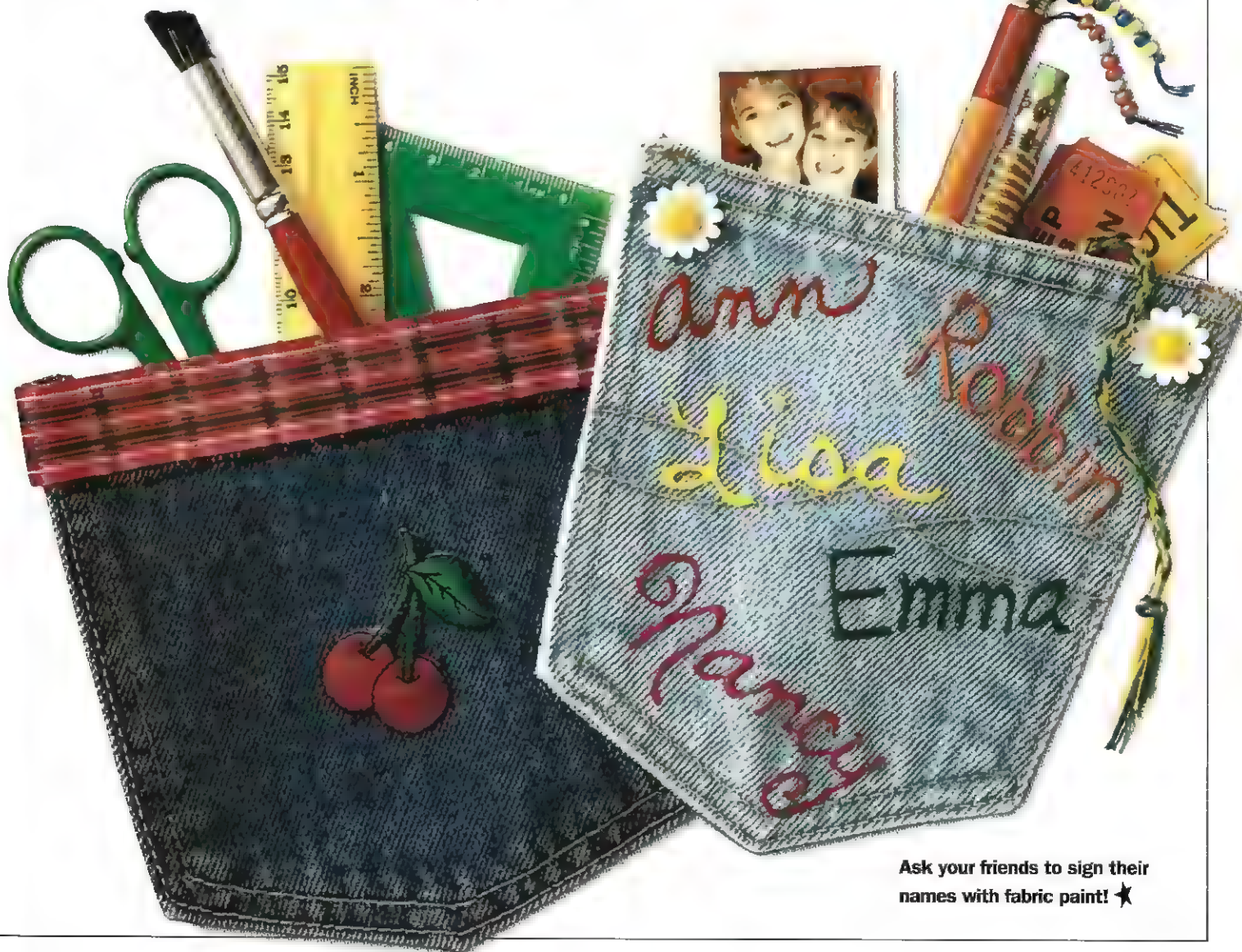
1  Ask an adult to help you cut around 1 back pocket on a pair of jeans. Cut straight across the top. Don't separate the pocket from the back layer of denim!



2 Trim any extra fabric and loose threads off the edges of the pocket.



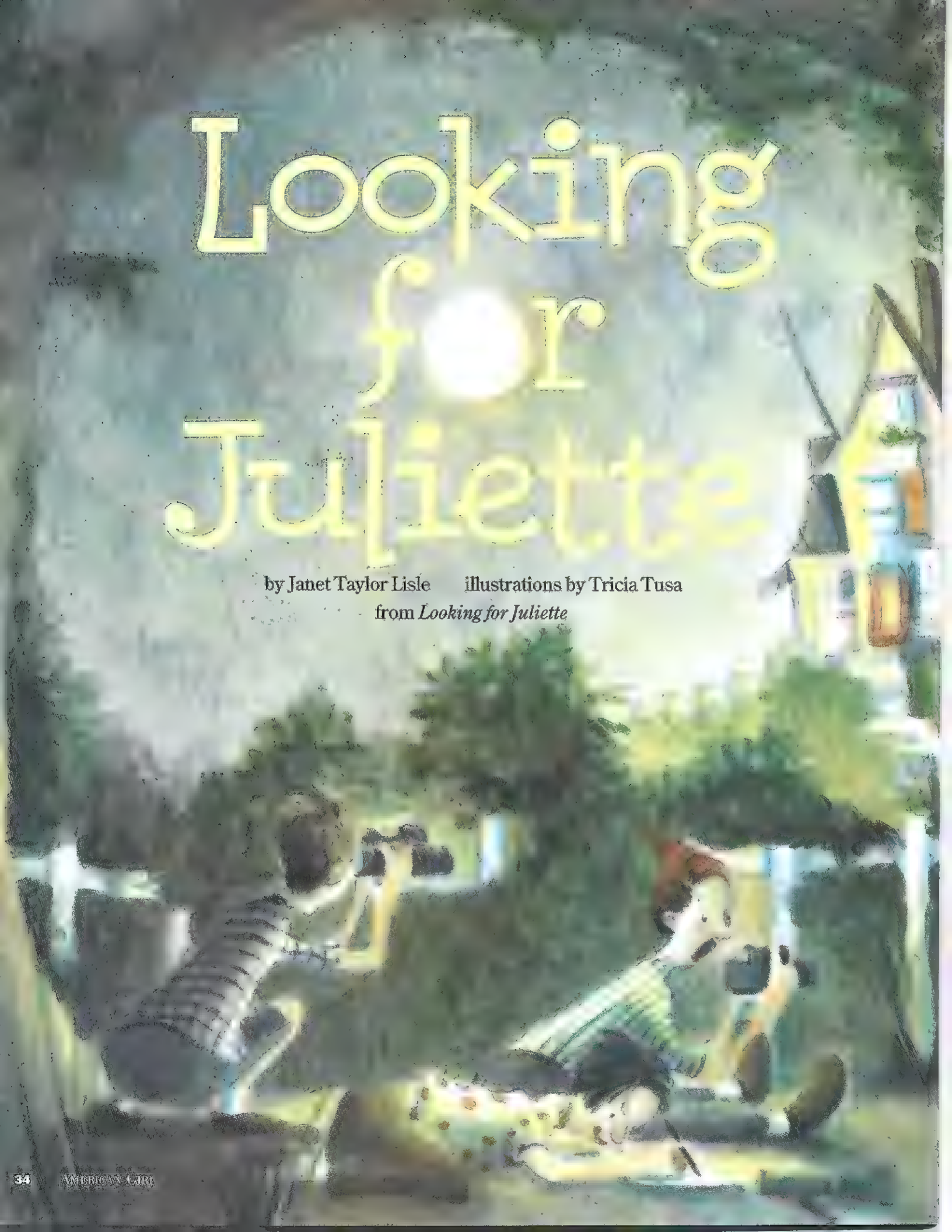
3 Turn pocket over. Glue a magnet to each back corner. Let dry. Decorate.



Ask your friends to sign their names with fabric paint! ★

Looking for Juliette

by Janet Taylor Lisle illustrations by Tricia Tusa
from *Looking for Juliette*



Poco, Walter, and Georgina have set up a spy system to track down a missing cat. There's just one place left to look—the one place they hope she won't be!

Miss Bone. It was an odd name—the sort of name that, when spoken, left a little chill in the air. Poco Lambert, 9, was suspicious of the old woman from the moment she moved in. She was a retired schoolteacher who was supposed to be caring for an absent neighbor's house, but . . .

"No squirrels run through that yard anymore," Poco informed her friends Georgina and Walter. "A whole family of rabbits has disappeared. I have the strangest feeling that something weird is going on."

"Something weird? Ridiculous!" Georgina had laughed. But even she began to wonder when Poco's dear friend, Juliette the cat, vanished the very next day.

"We should set up a system to spy on Miss Bone," Georgina declared.

Poco agreed. "Juliette may be in danger!"

The spy system consisted mostly of hiding, whenever possible, in the bushes across from Miss Bone's apartment. The old lady could not see the investigators going in or coming out.

"Anything to report?" Georgina asked after the first day.

"Miss Bone is very old and very ugly," Poco said. "She has crooked teeth and a wart on her chin."

"She has enormous hands with blue veins all over their backs," Walter added. "And pointed feet. There is a lump where her shoulders meet."

She wore a long, rough, wheat-colored cape, a type of clothing the group had never seen on anyone before.

"It reminds me of something from the olden

days," Georgina said.

"It reminds me of witches," Poco said straight out, a thought they'd all begun to have. "Any normal old woman would go to the hairdresser and have her hair done right. Miss Bone's hair scraggles around as if she doesn't care."

"Maybe she has more important things to think about," Walter said.

"That's what I'm afraid of," Poco replied.

Daily they watched Miss Bone for signs that Juliette was in her power. There were many afternoons when the bushes across from Miss Bone's door hid all three investigators at once and could be seen to shake from the bottled-up energy and whispering going on behind them.

Miss Bone not only looked strange, she had many disturbing habits, the investigation soon revealed. She was attracted to the moon and sometimes came outside simply to stand in its cold glare.

She collected mysterious plants and grasses from along the roadsides. She also collected mushrooms, strange spiked flowers, and bird nests, which she set out to dry on the little front stoop.

The most suspicious thing of all about Miss Bone was that she lived alone. She had never had a husband, never had a child; she had never had anyone that Poco's mother, or Georgina's, could think of. It made a person wonder what had gone wrong.

There was no time to feel sorry about such things. Juliette was still missing! The investigators began to see that, frightening though it was, they must get a look inside Miss Bone's apartment.

The chance came before anyone was ready, on a cold Tuesday afternoon. Poco was the only watch-

man on duty that day. She stood shivering in the bushes across from Miss Bone's door and was beginning to think of going home to get warm when Miss Bone stepped out her door. She was wearing her cape and an elegant fur hat whose soft gray color reminded Poco distinctly of . . . !

"Oh no! Juliette!" But that was beyond imagination. Poco closed her eyes and shook her head.

When she opened them again, Miss Bone had walked to the garage and was trying to start her old car. The motor was cold and took a long time to get going. When it caught, she backed out of the garage with a truly evil expression on her face and drove away.

Usually when the investigators were left alone this way, they amused themselves by peeping in the windows or sneaking around the big yard looking for clues. Now, whether from cold or the sight of Miss Bone's fur hat, Poco decided on a more drastic form of action. She crossed the driveway and stepped up on the stone stoop. The door was

unlocked! She pulled it open and entered.

The kitchen was small but tidy. The table was covered by a lace tablecloth, yellowed with age. There was a basket filled with dried flowers. Or were they herbs and grasses?

Poco leaned forward to inspect everything. What was that strange aroma? She sniffed the air. It was everywhere in the kitchen—a pungent, salty smell—but seemed to come most powerfully from a large metal pot left cooling on the stove.

The pot loomed well over her head. Poco looked around for something to stand on and discovered a tall stool pushed back into a corner. She dragged it to the stove, climbed up, and peeked over the pot's rim.

Inside, a thick, horrid liquid was still simmering a bit. Little bubbles swirled against one another and broke into a froth. She was about to climb down when a shadowy movement beneath the foam drew her attention. Leaning over the pot again, she saw a pale shape rising toward her. Like



a face floating up through dark waters, a single lidless eye surfaced in the center of the brew and, wobbling slightly, fixed its gaze upon her. Poco screamed and toppled backward off the stool.

The next day Poco came down with a terrible cold and had to stay home from school. Not until the end of the following week could the three investigators meet again. Poco's cold was better, but a nasty ear infection kept her in bed. She was too dizzy to walk, even to the bathroom, without help. Also, a rash had broken out all over her arms, chest, and face.

"The doctor says it's from my medicine," she said in a wispy voice to Walter and Georgina, who sat across the room. "He changed me to a new medicine. But I know who's really doing this."

"Who?" Georgina gazed at the tiny slumped figure.

"Miss Bone!"

"Good grief. That's impossible."

"Not for her. She wants to stop our investigation. So she's using her powers to make me sick. Georgina, she's a witch. I feel her."

Walter was pale. "Didn't they used to drown witches?" he asked. "Or did they burn them? If you're sure Miss Bone is doing this, we should tell someone. We should go to the police."

"Maybe," Poco said weakly. "I can't think straight anymore."

Georgina looked doubtful. "I'd like to pay a visit to Miss Bone first. I want to hear what she has to say."

Poco turned white. "But you can't!" she shrieked. "She'll come

after you. Or she'll put some even worse sickness into me. Oh, please, Georgina. Don't do it, please."

But Georgina stood firm and would not change her mind. Poco and Walter knew they could not let her go alone. Alone, she would be helpless. Like Juliette, she might never come back.

"All right!" Walter said. "We'll all go together to visit Miss Bone."

So Poco crawled out of bed and staggered into her clothes. She was still too dizzy to walk. Walter carried her piggyback as far as the bus stop. Then Georgina took over for the rest of the way.

On Miss Bone's stoop, Poco huddled against Walter while Georgina pushed the button that rang the doorbell. Far away, in some eerie recess of Miss Bone's apartment, a chime went off. Footsteps came slowly down toward them.

"Yes, what is it?" Miss Bone's frightful old face peered out. Her eyes dug deep into Poco at once. "My goodness, child! You look thoroughly ill. Come in, all of you, and get out of the cold. Whatever it is, I'll take care of you inside."

Poco's heart had never beat so hard. Walter was stiff with fright. Even Georgina had to catch her breath when she stepped into Miss Bone's kitchen and saw with her own eyes everything Poco had described.

There were the yellowed lace, the herbs and grasses, and—oh! (Georgina jumped in spite of herself)—the same tall stool that Poco had climbed up on to peer over the edge of the big pot.

And there was the stove! Georgina turned toward it, ready to gasp if the pot should still be there. It wasn't. A blackened teakettle squatted on one of the burners



instead. It was to this that Miss Bone now turned her attention.

"Of course, you must have some tea," she said, grasping the handle with a faint smile. Or was she frowning? Her face was so wrinkly it was hard to tell. "You look raw and cold as polar penguins!"

She filled the kettle at the sink and set it back on the stove. "Not that polar penguins really are cold, since they are born on ice and live on ice and have never known anything else. Only we who look at them think they must be cold," Miss Bone went on, turning up the gas, "because we would be cold if we were in their shoes. Or should I say 'in their flippers'? We so often misunderstand the ways of creatures different from us."

The investigators stared at her with unblinking eyes. Miss Bone gave them a sharp-toothed smile, opened a cupboard, and looked inside.

"Ladyfingers," she announced. "I'm afraid that's all I have for sweets."

This was too much for Poco. She sagged toward the floor. Walter caught her just in time.

"Heavens, child!" Miss Bone cried out. "Go into the living room and lie down."

"N-n-no, thank you," Walter said. "We'll just stay here, all together, if you don't mind. We have to be leaving in a minute, anyway."

"Suit yourselves," Miss Bone said. "But I must tell you that I have no intention of letting you go home just yet. No one who enters my kitchen gets away so easily as that!"

Georgina and Walter exchanged terrified looks, and Poco's legs gave out completely at this. Walter lowered her carefully into one of the kitchen chairs



and sank down beside her.

Georgina sat across from them. No one seemed able to utter a word. The old teacher had boiled the tea water, poured it into a china teapot, brought cups and saucers to the table, and sat down herself before the silence was broken. Then it was she who spoke.

"Well!" She opened her vein-choked hands as if to conjure another spell. "I'm so pleased you've come to visit me at last! I've been watching you, you know. Oh yes, I've had my eye on you."

The old woman handed Poco a cup of tea. "At first I couldn't imagine what you children were doing out there in the bushes," she said, handing Georgina and Walter their cups. "Then I understood. You were looking for the lost cat. I heard it had run away. Perhaps you thought I'd given it shelter? I suppose I should have come right out and told you I hadn't, but . . . truthfully, I rather liked having you there."

Miss Bone gave them a small smile. "I kept hoping you'd decide to come inside and visit me."

"So you haven't seen Juliette at all—is that what you're saying?" Georgina said, speaking at last in a high, nervous voice.

"Is that the kitty's name?" Miss Bone shrugged her shoulders. "No, not a whisker!"

"And you haven't done anything with her all this time she's been lost?"

"Done anything with her? What would I have done?" Miss Bone looked confused, then offended. "Did you think I'd hurt her?"

"We weren't sure," Georgina said.

"A large pot? Here?" Miss Bone went on, in answer to Georgina's next question. "I cook



soups from time to time in such a pot as you've described. I'm not fond of canned soup, especially the chowders. Why pay all that money for ready-made when it's so easy to boil up a few fish heads and carcasses into good fish stock?"

"Fish heads!" Georgina exclaimed. She looked in alarm toward Walter.

He cleared his throat. "Ahem . . . do these fish heads ever happen to have . . . um . . . open eyes?"

"They always have them," Miss Bone said. "That's how they come. Why?"

"Oh, dear," Walter muttered.

"You cooked up a fish chowder not too long ago, didn't you?" Georgina asked.

Miss Bone was astonished. "Why, yes, I did," she said. "But how would you know? Or perhaps I see." Her face fell. "Your investigation."

Georgina nodded.

Miss Bone looked away. There was a pause while she groped first in one pocket, then more desperately in another.

"Well!" she said finally, with a brave attempt at brightness. "And here I'd managed to convince myself that you'd come to make friends. Of course, you needn't stay a minute longer, any of you. What a horror I must seem to you."

She fumbled in yet another pocket and this time drew out a crumpled bit of tissue.

"Don't mind me," cried Miss Bone, pressing her nose into the tissue. "I believe I'm coming down with a terrible cold!"

Georgina sat still for a moment, watching the old woman. Then she leaned forward and took Miss Bone's leathery hand in hers.

"Oh, Miss Bone, don't be upset.

We've been wrong about you. We are so sorry. Somehow we got the idea that you'd kidnapped Juliette. Poco sneaked into your apartment once while you were out. She was absolutely sure you were a w—"

Miss Bone glanced sharply toward Poco. "Good heavens!" she cried out, before Georgina could finish. "Quick, help me carry her to the couch."

They all reached for Poco, whose head was listing dangerously to one side.

"Put her legs up on cushions!" Miss Bone ordered. "We must get the blood running into her head. Georgina, dampen a dish towel and lay it on her forehead. We'll bring her around."

Miss Bone mopped her own wrinkled forehead and gazed at Poco in real distress.

"The poor little thing should have been in a bed all this time, not gallivanting about in the cold. I certainly will not allow her to go back home with you," she told the others.

"But . . . she'll want to go!"

"So she will, but I won't allow it."

"But you can't keep her here forever!" cried

Walter, his worst suspicions about Miss Bone rising up again.

"Of course not," she said with a teacherish snap. "I am going to call Mrs. Lambert and tell her to come get her poor child right now in her car. I would drive her home myself if my old broomstick weren't having one of its evil spells. The blasted thing wouldn't start for anything this morning!"

Miss Bone gave the friends such an accusing stare that Walter blushed and Georgina lowered her head in shame. Then the old lady rose and strode nobly into the





kitchen toward the telephone. A half hour later, they were all on their way home.

It was all very well for Georgina and Walter to believe in Miss Bone's innocence. Poco could not. In the week following, she kept to her bed with grim determination. For dear Juliette had still not returned.

"Poco still believes Miss Bone is keeping Juliette prisoner," Georgina said to Walter. "She thinks that if she gives up and falls under Miss Bone's spell, Juliette will be lost forever. Until Juliette comes back she refuses to move."

"Let's go visit her," Walter said. "She sounds a little crazy."

They walked over that afternoon. Poco answered the door and gave them the sweetest smile.

"Come upstairs, please," she whispered. "An amazing thing has happened."

They followed Poco up the stairs and into her

bedroom. There on the foot of her bed lay Miss Bone's beautiful gray fur hat.

Georgina jumped. "Good grief!"

Walter backed away. Now he *knew* her mind was gone.

Poco beamed. "Isn't it wonderful?" she asked. "Just where Juliette always used to sleep."

Georgina looked at her friend in horror. "Oh, Poco," she began. But suddenly something impossible occurred. The fur hat twitched.

Then, as Georgina and Walter watched, the hat began to unfold. A pair of ears developed in its middle; a pink nose appeared. Two blue eyes blinked open amid the fur. A paw stretched out in a leisurely way, and the whole hat turned into an enormous yawning cat.

"It's a miracle, isn't it?" Poco asked them. "Juliette came back this morning. She just scratched at the door, and we let her in."

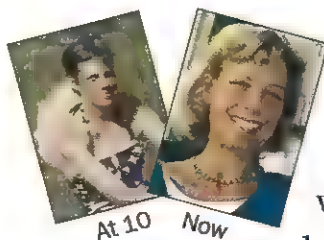
"Well," sniffed Georgina. "Now you know Miss Bone is not a witch. This absolutely proves it."

"Maybe." Poco smiled and gave a maddening shrug. "Or maybe it's the one thing that proves that she was."

Georgina and Walter could only groan. ★

Meet the Author

Janet Taylor Lisle



I grew up in a small New England town where my friends and I hung out on the sidewalks.



We had sharp eyes for strangers, and often speculated about what lay behind an unusual face or an odd walk. A neighbor like Miss Bone would certainly have interested us!

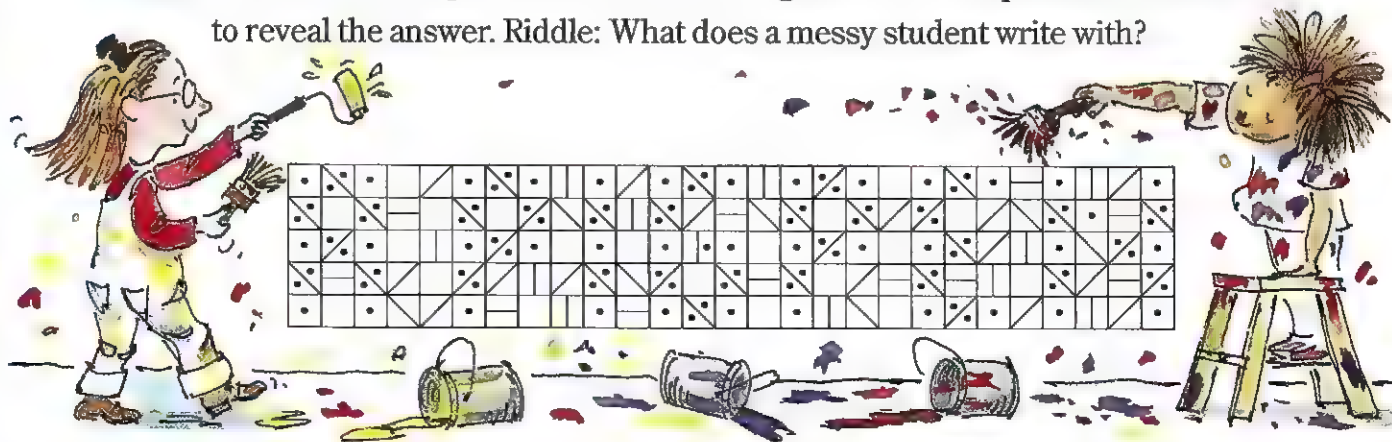
The Giggle Gang



These Giggle Gang girls have exactly \$10 to buy three pumpkins. Which pumpkins should they pick if they don't want any change left over?

Dot's All, Folks!

The answer to the following riddle is hidden in the grid. Color the spaces that have dots to reveal the answer. Riddle: What does a messy student write with?



First Monster: That girl rolled her eyes at me! Second Monster: A gentleman would roll them back to her.

Grace Schaefer
Age 10, Indianapolis, Indiana

Where do ghosts on the highway hang out? Toll "boos."

Age 12, Lawrence, New York

What does a vampire take when he has a cough? Coffin drops.

Age 12, Lawrence, New York

All answers on page 44.



Book Lovers' Crossword



Fill in this crossword with the last names of the authors who wrote these famous children's books.

If you get stuck, look up the books in your library. Or use the Hint Lists below—they list the authors' names alphabetically. But you still have to figure out who wrote what!

Across

3. *Bunnicula*
5. *Little House on the Prairie*
7. *Story of Ferdinand*
9. *Nancy Drew Mysteries*
10. *Little Women*
11. *Fourth Grade Rats*
14. *Pippi in the South Seas*
17. *Sarah, Plain and Tall*
19. *Curious George*
21. *Freaky Friday*
22. *Make Way for Ducklings*
24. *Heidi*
25. *Goosebumps mysteries*

Down

1. *The Hobbit*
2. *The Summer of the Swans*
4. *Charlotte's Web*
6. *The Cat Ate My Gymsuit*
8. *The Black Stallion*
12. *Ramona the Pest*
13. *The Berenstain Bears Go to School*
15. *Superfudge*
16. *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*
18. *Number the Stars*
20. *The Night Before Christmas*
23. *Escape to Witch Mountain*

Hint List Across

Alcott
Howe
Keene
Leaf
Lindgren
MacLachlan
McCloskey
Rey
Rodgers
Spinelli
Spyri
Stine
Wilder

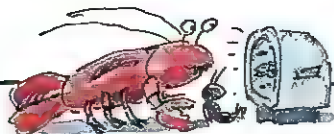
Hint List Down

Berenstain
Blume
Byars
Cleary
Danziger
Farley
Key
Lowry
Moore
Seuss
Tolkien
White



What do you call a person who lives next door to a vampire? A tasty midnight snack. *Chelsea Bagnard* Why couldn't the

Age 12, Altadena, California



The Giggle Gang

Three's a Crowd

What do an ant, a lobster, and a television have in common? They all have antennae! Each of these trios is alike in some way. See if you can figure out how.

1. A rainbow, a tiger, a referee
2. Piano keys, zebras, Oreo cookies
3. Your fingers, the letter *t*, your heart
4. LifeSavers, paper towels, film
5. A typewriter, a locksmith, a piano

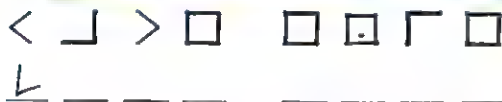
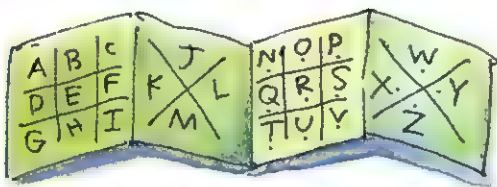
Inspired by the board game Tribond for Kids



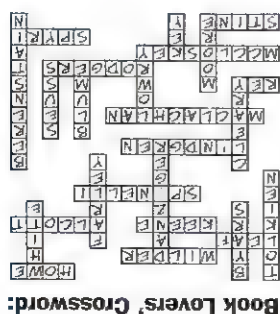
AG Code

Use the decoder to unscramble the answer to the riddle below.

What's the scariest lake to swim in?



Answer Box



Book Lovers' Crossword:

Three's a Crowd: 1. They have stripes, 2. They're black and white, 3. Things you cross, 4. They come in rolls, 5. Things with keys.

AG Code: Lake Erie.



The buzzword, ubiquitous, is used on page 31.
Pumpkin Picking: The pumpkins that cost \$2.25, \$3.75, and \$4 or \$1.50, \$2.25, and \$6.25.
Dot's All, Folks!

Refrigerator Tag

You'll work up an appetite playing this game. It comes from Colleen Lis, age 12, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It's best when played with four or more people.



The rules:

1. Pick four objects to be bases, and give each base a name: "Hate it," "Love it," "It's O.K.," and "Never tried it."
2. Pick someone to be **It**. **It** stands in the center, and the players stand on any base they want. **It** calls out the name of a food.
3. The players run to the base that describes how they feel about that food. No fibbing allowed! **It** tries to tag a runner before she gets to the base.
4. Whoever gets tagged is **It** in the next round. Ready? Set? Brussels sprouts!

Who's That Girl?

Here's an American girl of yesterday. Read the clues about her and guess who she became when she grew up.



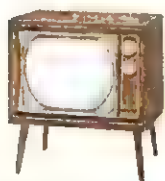
Clue 1

My family moved a lot because of my dad's job in the Navy. I was shy, and having to start over at new schools was always hard. One good thing about moving so often was that my three sisters and I became really close since we had to rely on each other.



Clue 2

Of the many houses we lived in, our home in New Jersey was one of my favorites. There was a huge backyard with a badminton court, a small putting green, a swing set, and *three* little playhouses!



Clue 3

I was constantly watching medical dramas on TV. When the show was over, I would go back to my room and act out the entire program. If the show was really sad, I could even make myself cry!



Clue 4

I loved to read and always imagined becoming the characters in my books. I wanted to be a nurse, a dancer, and an actress—all at the same time!



Here I am at age 11.



Clue 5

My sisters and I loved to act out Nancy Drew stories. We'd hide clues around the neighborhood and pretend to solve the mysteries just like Nancy!

Take a guess!

When she grew up, this American girl became:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a doctor | <input type="checkbox"/> a travel writer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> an actress | <input type="checkbox"/> a detective |

Turn the page and find out if you're right!

She's Patricia Richardson

It's hard to believe this outgoing actress was once a very shy girl. But that's how Patricia Richardson, who plays down-to-earth mom Jill Taylor on the popular TV show *Home Improvement*, remembers herself.

Moving often was especially hard for Patricia because just as she made new friends, she had to say goodbye again. But moving also helped her build confidence and overcome her shyness. Thanks to those experiences growing up, today she makes friends easily with other cast members. Perhaps even more important, she now has the courage to get up and perform before thousands of strangers!

You can write to Patricia at *Home Improvement*, 500 South Buena Vista Street, Burbank, California 91521.

Patricia first dreamed of becoming an actress when she was twelve years old. An enthusiastic reader with an active imagination, she longed to live in the world of books. "Then I realized that if I became an actress, I really *could* live in all those different worlds!" she explains.

Today, Patricia finds that raising three children of her own makes it easier to play the role of Jill Taylor. "I don't have to think about the character. It comes naturally," she says.

Her TV family includes Jonathan Taylor Thomas, whom Patricia describes as so mature it's scary! "He reads the newspaper every day, cover to cover—and has since he was nine years old!" she says with motherly pride. For Patricia, living in two different worlds is *twice* the fun! ★



Patricia's TV family

Patricia's advice to American girls:

"Knowledge is one of the keys to becoming a good actress. The things you know and the experiences you have make up the tool kit you'll bring to work!"

HELP!

Dear American Girl,

There's a girl in my class who's a really great artist. All of the kids say she's the best in the class. In other classes, they said that I was the best. I got used to it. Not anymore!

A Bad Artist

Instead of seeing this girl as competition, try to see her as someone who can inspire you to improve your skills. But don't, repeat don't, start trying to make your pictures look just like hers. Art isn't like math, where there's only one right way to do things. It's a personal expression of how you see the world! The best artists are the ones who let their own unique ideas shine through in every picture they make.



Dear American Girl,

I've made friends with the most popular girl in school. She is sometimes nice, but mostly she puts me down. I have more fun with my not-so-popular friends than with her. But when I'm with her, I'm popular.

Mixed UP!



It's fun to make a new friend, and exciting to bask in the glow of this girl's popularity. But beware! If you neglect your other friends—or, worse, start to put them down—you'll lose them in a flash. And no matter how great popularity feels, it won't make up for the loss of friends you really enjoy—and who like you for you.



Dear American Girl,

I can't spell. I study hard. And listen. But on a spelling test, if I'm having trouble, I end up looking on someone's paper. Please help me.

Trying

You already know how guilty cheating makes you feel. While everyone else is feeling honestly happy or sad about their grades, you're feeling

awful. Ask your teacher for extra help in spelling. While you're doing homework, keep a dictionary handy and use it—knowing how to look up the answer is almost as good as knowing it by heart! Then, when you're tempted to let your eyes wander during tests, tell yourself firmly: "No! I'm doing this on my own." You may get a lower grade, but that will bother you much less than a guilty conscience.



Dear American Girl,

My friends and I are going to be separated from each other next year. Some of us are going to one middle school, and some of us are going to another school. What should I do?

Soon to be friendless

Though you'll have much less time with your friends than ever before, it doesn't have to be the end of your friendship! Stay in touch with calls and weekend fun. But don't overlook the advantages of being separated. It's a chance to make more friends, and to learn an important truth: that you can do just great all on your own.

MORE HELP!

Dear American Girl,

I have a friend who calls me twelve times a day. I like her, but she's overdoing it!

Wondering

Tell your friend that you love talking to her, but that certain times of day, like dinner and homework time, are off-limits for calls. If the phone rings and you aren't in the mood to talk, remember that you don't *have* to answer! Let a family member take a message, then return the call when you're ready to chat.



Dear American Girl,

I hate exercising. It's boring and it hurts. Can you give me some advice?

Out of Shape

Some kids avoid exercise because they think it's hard work. But fun stuff that gets you moving is great exercise, too! Take a dance class, or play music and think up crazy dances on your own. Use a watch to time yourself racing to different places. Get a jump rope and count how many jumps you make without tripping. Try to beat your own records!



Dear American Girl,

My parents have been divorced for as long as I can remember. I want to live with my dad because I always fight with my mom. I always agree with my dad when I visit. How can I convince my mom to let me move?

Ready to Pack

Before you start packing, do some thinking about why things seem easier with your dad.

Because you're just visiting, time with him may seem more like a vacation than day-to-day life.

You're both on your best behavior, and many of the things that can cause arguments between parents and kids—like homework, chores, and friends—just aren't a part of your visits. Your parents

probably have good reasons for deciding that you should live with your mom. You'll feel better if you focus on working out your disagreements right where you are—instead of trying to move away from them.



Advice from You

"Are you scared of spiders, snakes, sharks, or some other type of animal? My advice is to learn more about them. Many people fear or hate animals because they don't know much about them. If you learn more about them, your fears will go away. You may even become more amazed at them than scared of them!"

Callie Jacobson
Age 11, Portland, Oregon

**Need advice? Write:
Help!**

AmericanGirl

**8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562**



The Migration of the Negro series (Panel #58), by Jacob Lawrence, 1940-41

Imagine *you've never held a piece of chalk before.*

It's 1919, and your first day at a brand-new school in a new city. Everything here in New York seems strange—the tall buildings, the gritty sidewalks, the crowds of people. Your new school seems strange, too, but it's a good kind of strange. You have your own neat desk and a shiny new book and pencil just for you.

Your old school, in Georgia, had no chalk, no blackboard, no schoolbooks. Although slavery ended more than fifty years ago, life in the South is still hungry and hard for many African Americans.

Your parents heard there were good jobs and homes for black people up North. They decided to *migrate*, or move, so you and your sisters would have better lives. And your family isn't alone. Over the next eleven years, more than a million black southerners will migrate north, heading for a different kind of freedom.

Now, standing at the blackboard, you grip the chalk and begin to write. The smell of chalk dust makes you dizzy with happiness. *If hope had a smell, you think, it would be just like this.* ★



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Let It Snow!

Ideas for the most wonderful winter ever

Sequins and Satin

A designer makes one ice skater's dream come true

She Said What!?

Girls talk about rumors and how to handle them

Clip Out a Gift!

Clever coupons to give to your friends and family

Plus:

Pizza soup and your pop-out paper doll #25